

great universal mind, from a like internal unknown cause, fall into that arrangement. To say that the different ideas, which compose the reason of the Supreme, fall into order of themselves, and by their own nature, is really to talk without any precise meaning. If it has a meaning, I would fain know why it is not as good sense to say, that the parts of the material world fall into order of themselves and by their own nature. Can the one opinion be intelligible while the other is not so? "

Fairly to meet this reasoning of the prince of sceptics is not an achievement of dulness or ignorance. In order to do it triumphantly, we want, what Dr. Paley could not find, a distinct example of the creation of numerous organic beings by some cause independent of themselves. I say, he could not find such an example; for on a question of natural theology, he did not think it proper to appeal to the Bible; nor had geology, when he wrote, revealed her astonishing record on this subject. But as it is now developed, it puts an end to all controversy as to the origin of the organic world.

My second remark, however, on this argument is, that even admitting its correctness, it only proves the commencement of organic natures, but does not show that the matter of which they are composed may not have been eternal.

In the third place, an argument against the eternal existence of matter has been derived by Sir John Herschel, one of the most distinguished natural philosophers of the day, from the atomic constitution of bodies, as made known to us by chemistry. This science makes it certainly probable, that even the infinitesimal particles of matter have a definite and peculiar shape, and size, and weight, in each of the elements. "Now," says this writer, "when we see a great number of things precisely alike, we do not believe this similarity to have originated, except from a common principle independent of them." "The discoveries alluded to effectually destroy the idea of an external self-existent matter, by giving to each of its atoms the essential characters at once of a manufactured article and a subordinate agent."

To this argument the atheist's reply would be essentially the same as that last considered; and in one respect it would even be more forcible, because the atomic constitution of bodies, being less complex, is less obviously the result of foreign agency, and may more easily be regarded as the necessary property of